The Divine Paradox of Sri Hari

(Eternal Harmony of Shanta–Ugra–Kshobhana)

Sri Vishnu Sahasranama Bhashya

UGRAH - KSHOBANA – AKSHOBHYA

Dvaita Siddhanta, as interpreted by Sri Madhvacharya, describes Lord Vishnu as possessing the simultaneous, non-contradictory attributes of absolute peace (*Shanta*), supreme independent power (*Ugra*), and cosmic agitation (*Kshobhana*). The divine nature of Sri Hari is characterized by an eternal, tranquil, and blissful state (*Swaroopa*) that remains unaffected by the creation, preservation, or destruction of the material world. Key avatars such as Narasimha, Parashurama, Rama, Krishna, and the future Kalki demonstrate this unique synthesis

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of formidable power and serene consciousness, acting as a protector of dharma.

In the framework of **Dvaita Siddhanta (Tattvavada)** established by Sri Madhvacharya, the Supreme Lord (*Sarvottama*) is eternally filled with infinite, flawless, and auspicious attributes (*Kalyana Gunas*).

Every name in the *Sri Vishnu Sahasranama* represents a real, eternal perfection. As Sri Madhvacharya declares in the *Mahabharata Tatparya Nirnaya* (Chapter 6), each divine name carries a minimum of 100 valid spiritual meanings.

The seemingly contrasting attributes of absolute peace (*Shanta*), formidable power (*Ugra*), and cosmic agitation (*Kshobhana*) exist simultaneously in Sri Hari without any internal contradiction.

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1. The Essential Nature: Absolute Peace (*Shanta Swaroopa*)

Lord Vishnu's inherent nature (*Swaroopa*) is utmost peace and untainted bliss. To His devotees, His supreme majesty is never a source of fear. Instead, it serves as the ultimate anchor of safety, reassurance, and profound peace (***Shanta Swabhaava***), as glorified in the dhyana sloka: ***"Shaantaakaaram Bhujagasayanam Padmanabham..."***

In the opening verse of the ***Dwadasha Stotra* (1.1)**, Sri Madhvacharya highlights this eternally blissful, flawless status of the Lord, whom we must approach with reverence:

वन्दे वन्द्यं सदानन्दं वासुदेवं निरञ्जनम् ।

इन्दिरापतिमाद्यादि वरदेश वरप्रदम् ॥

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vande vandyaṁ sadānandaṁ vāsudevaṁ nirañjanam |
indirāpatimādyādi varadeśa varapradam ||

Meaning: "I bow (*vande*) to Lord Vasudeva, who is the ultimate object of worship (*vandyam*), filled with eternal bliss (*sadānandam*), flawless and completely untainted (*nirañjanam*), the consort of Goddess Lakshmi (*indirā-patim*), the supreme master of all boon-givers, and the ultimate granter of liberation (*varapradam*)."

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2. The Majesty of Independence: *Ugraha* (Sloka #45 – Naama # 421)

The name *Ugra* does not imply a negative, volatile worldly emotion like human anger. In Tattvavada, it signifies that He is completely independent (*Sarva-tantra-svatantra*). He cannot be bound, limited, or controlled by anyone else.

When cosmic situations warrant the protection of *Dharma*, He manifests this formidable power. He becomes the deity of the *Narasimha Anustubh Mantra*: *"Ugram Veeram Maha Vishnum..."*—the very death of death personified, terrifying to evil forces but deeply reassuring to the righteous.

In the ***Vishnusahasranama Bhashya***, the revered Dvaita scholar **Sri Satyasandha Tirtharu** provides the exact philosophical definition for this name:

उत्गता शक्तिः अस्मात् इति उग्रः । सर्वतन्त्रस्वतन्त्रत्वात् न कोऽपि अस्य बन्धकः नियन्ता वा अस्ति ॥

utgatā śaktiḥ asmāt iti ugraḥ | sarvatantrasvatantratvāt na ko'pi asya bandhakaḥ niyantā vā asti ||

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Meaning: "*Ugra* means He from whom extraordinary, absolute power issues forth. Because He is completely independent, there is absolutely no one in the cosmos who can bind, limit, or control Him."

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3. Cosmic Action vs. Unshakable Stillness: *Kshobhana* & *Akshobhya*

The Prime Mover (*Kshobhana* - Sloka #41 – Naama # 374): Literally, *Kshobha* means commotion, agitation, or disturbance. Sri Hari is called *Kshobhana* because He is the sole power that agitates inert matter (*Jada Prakriti*) to kickstart creation during the great deluge (*Pralaya*). Concurrently, He instils deep panic and terror directly into the hearts of the wicked to break their arrogance.

The Unperturbed Master (*Akshobhya* - Sloka # 86 & 107– Naama # 801 & 999): While He stirs the entire cosmos into motion and throws the wicked into turmoil, He Himself remains ***Akshobhya***. Because He is completely distinct from matter and individual souls (*Jivatmas*), the material world can never reciprocally affect, alter, or perturb Him.

क्षोभयामास सृष्ट्यादौ प्रकृतिं पुरुषं हरिः ।

स्वेच्छया क्षोभणः प्रोक्तः सृष्टिस्थित्यन्तकारणः ॥ २ ॥

kṣobhayāmāsa sṛṣṭyādau prakṛtiṁ puruṣaṁ hariḥ |
svecchayā kṣobhaṇaḥ proktaḥ sṛṣṭi-sthityanta-kāraṇaḥ ||

Because Lord Hari, purely out of His own independent Will, enters and agitates both matter and souls at the dawn of creation, He is traditionally designated and sung by the name

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Kṣobhaṇaḥ—the ultimate cause behind the creation, preservation, and dissolution of the cosmos."

[**Pāuraṇa Saṁhitā**, cited in the Dvaita Vedānta tradition]

"According to the traditional commentary (vyākhyāna) on the Viṣṇu Sahasranāma, the name Kṣobhaṇaḥ is defined as:

प्रकृतिं क्षोभयामास सर्गकाले हरिः स्वयम् ।

दुष्टानां हृदये क्षोभं ददाति इति च क्षोभणः ॥

prakṛtiṁ kṣobhayāmāsa sargakāle hariḥ svayam |

duṣṭānāṁ hṛdaye kṣobhaṁ dadāti iti ca kṣobhaṇaḥ ||

Meaning: "At the time of creation, Sri Hari Himself agitates inert nature (*Prakriti*) to bring forth the universe. He is also called ***Kshobhana*** because He instils deep panic and terror directly into the hearts of wicked forces."

"While this specific verse is preserved in the early commentary tradition, the Madhva Siddhānta highlights a vital distinction: the agitation (kṣobha) of Prakriti by Lord Hari is not an illusion (Māyā/Vivarta). Rather, as established by Sri Madhvacharya, Prakriti is a real, eternal, but completely dependent material reality (Paratantra-tattva) that requires the literal, independent will of Narayana to move out of its equilibrium state."

"न क्षोभ्यते जातुचित् प्राकृतैः विकारैः इति अक्षोभ्यः ।"

"na kṣobhyate jātucit prākṛtaiḥ vikāraiḥ iti akṣobhyaḥ ||"

Meaning: "He who is never, under any circumstances (*jātucit*), agitated or modified (*na kṣobhyate*) by material transformations and modifications (*prākṛtaiḥ vikāraiḥ*) is called **Akṣobhyaḥ** (The Unshakable / Flawless)."

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4. The Unified Divine Form: *Ugra* and *Shanta* Together

While tearing apart Hiranyakashipu or dissolving the universe during *Pralaya*, He displays His terrifying, independent majesty as *Ugra Narasimha* (Mahasimha). Yet, with His eternal consort, Goddess Lakshmi Devi (*Sri*), by His side, that very same Lord is instantly recognized as the gentle protector (*Sri Nrusimha*).

He is always…

वन्दे वन्द्यं सदानन्दं वासुदेवं निरञ्जनम् ।

इन्दिरापतिमाद्यादि वरदेश वरप्रदम् ॥

vande vandyaṁ sadānandaṁ vāsudevaṁ nirañjanam |
indirāpatimādyādi varadeśa varapradam ||

Dwadasha Stotra (1.1)

I worship Lord Vasudeva, who is always the embodiment of eternal bliss, completely flawless, and the supreme object of adoration. He is the Lord of Goddess Lakshmi, the primordial origin of all creators, the Lord over all boon-granting deities, and the ultimate giver of the highest boons.

Traditionally dedicated to **Lord Lakshmi-Narasimha**…

उग्रोऽपि रमते लक्ष्म्या युक्तः शान्तो जगद्गुरुः ।

ugro'pi ramate lakṣmyā yuktaḥ śānto jagadguruḥ |

Meaning: "Though He is *Ugra* (uncontrollably fierce to the wicked), the Preceptor of the Universe (*Jagadguru*) is eternally experiencing bliss (*Ramate*) and remains perfectly peaceful (*Shanta*) when united with Goddess Lakshmi."

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5. Historical Manifestations of the *Ugraha* and *Kshobhana* Principles

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Because there is absolute identity (*Abheda*) between the root form of Lord Narayana and all His incarnations, this formidable power has stepped into material history whenever *Dharma* required absolute intervention:

A. Parashurama: The Purifying Fire

When the ruling warrior class (*Kshatriyas*) succumbed to arrogance and lawlessness, Lord Vishnu manifested as Parashurama. His campaign to rid the earth of tyrannical rulers twenty-one times was not driven by human emotional vengeance. Instead, it was the raw, uncontrollable power (*Utgata-shakti*) of cosmic justice. In Tattvavada literature, Parashurama is recognized as the ultimate, cleansing fire—inherently pure, consuming the dry wood of wicked forces while remaining completely untainted, flawless, and detached within Himself.

B. Sri Rama: The Annihilation of the *Moola Bala*

During the ultimate phase of the Ramayana war, Ravana unleashed his hidden, ultimate reserve force—the **Moola Bala**—consisting of billions of formidable, elite demonic warriors. Stepping onto the battlefield alone, Lord Rama unleashed a display of unmatchable, blinding speed and celestial weaponry. He created such immense commotion (*Kshobha*) that the demons perceived a thousand distinct forms of Rama actively slaying them simultaneously. While the entire demonic army was thrown into absolute panic and terminal shock (*Kshobhana*), Lord Rama's inner consciousness remained completely unperturbed, steady, and anchoring the universe in supreme peace (*Akshobhya*).

C. Sri Krishna: The Majesty of the *Viswaroopa Darshana*

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On the battlefield of Kurukshetra, Lord Krishna granted Arjuna a vision of His all-pervading Cosmic Form (*Viswaroopa*). Arjuna describes a form of blinding radiance burning the cosmos, with infinite mouths devouring the wicked. The sight was so terrifying that the entire universe shook with fear, and Arjuna explicitly cried out that his own mind was perturbed by awe and panic (*Pravyaatita-manas*).

This terrifying, independent form of the Lord as **Kala** was unveiled to establish the absolute dependence of all souls upon Him. While this form was an agonizing terror (*Kshobhana*) to the Kauravas, it simultaneously served as the ultimate protective shield, refuge, and source of auspicious peace (*Bhadram* and *Shanta*) to His surrendered devotee, Arjuna.

D. Kalki: The Climactic Conclusion of Kali Yuga

At the end of the current age during the upcoming Kalki Avatara, when *Adharma* reaches its absolute peak, Lord Vishnu will descend riding the white horse Devadatta, wielding a blazing sword of absolute justice.

As **Ugraha**, He manifests uncontrollable, independent sovereignty to completely uproot global evil. As **Kshobhana**, He throws the entire world of the wicked into terminal panic and agitation, dismantling their corrupt systems. Yet, as **Akshobhya**, His inner consciousness remains perfectly serene, using this formidable cleansing purely as an act of cosmic mercy to pave the way for the absolute peace (**Shanta Swaroopa**) of the upcoming Satya Yuga.

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Conclusion...

In Dvaita philosophy, these forms and names are not passing phases, illusions, or temporary masks. Lord Vishnu does not change from one state to another. He is *simultaneously* terrifyingly fierce to the wicked, boundlessly gentle to the righteous, the active mover of the universe, and the eternally unshakeable, detached Supreme Being. Whether as the cleansing axe of Parashurama, the solitary bow of Rama destroying the *Moola Bala*, or the infinite cosmic jaws of Krishna's *Viswaroopa*, Sri Hari moves everything while remaining completely unmoved.

नारायणाय परिपूर्णगुणार्णवाय विश्वोदयस्थितिलयोन्नतिबन्धमोक्षाः ।

अस्य यतोऽस्य सुबन्धनिशीर्णशक्तिः चिकीर्षितः तेन देववरस्य मङ्गळम् ॥

nārāyaṇāya paripūrṇaguṇārṇavāya
viśvodayasthitilayonnātibandhamokṣāḥ |
asya yato'sya subandhaniśīrṇaśaktiḥ cikīrṣitaḥ tena devavarasya maṅgaḷam ||

Meaning: "Mangled prayers and auspicious greetings unto Narayana, the supreme among gods, who is an ocean filled with infinite, flawless, and complete attributes (*paripūrṇa-guṇa-arṇavāya*). He is the absolute source of the universe's creation, sustenance, dissolution, control, knowledge, ignorance, bondage, and liberation; and by His desire alone, the bonds of material suffering are completely shattered. He is Doshadhoora.

नारायणाय परिपूर्णगुणार्णवाय
विश्वोदयस्थितिलयोन्नियतिप्रदाय ।
ज्ञानप्रदाय विबुधासुरसौख्यदुःख-
सत्कारणाय विततय नमो नमस्ते ॥

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nārāyaṇāya paripūrṇaguṇārṇavāya
viśvodayasthitilayonniyatipradāya |
jñānapradāya vibudhāsurasaukhyaduḥkha-
satkāraṇāya vitatāya namo namaste ||

"My repeated and pious salutations to the Supreme God Narayana, who is an infinite ocean of flawless, auspicious attributes (anantha kalyaana guna paripoorna); who is the cause of the universe's origin, sustenance, dissolution, and supreme guidance; who is the giver of all knowledge; who is all-pervading; and who is the abiding cause of salvation to the noble and damnation to the wicked."

नाहं कर्ता हरिः कर्ता तत्पूजा कर्मचाखिलम् ।

तथाऽपि मत्कृता पूजा तत्प्रसादेन नान्यथा ॥

nāhaṁ kartā hariḥ kartā tatpūjā karmacākhilam |
tathā'pi matkṛtā pūjā tatprasādena nānyathā ||

Meaning: "I am not the independent doer, Sri Hari alone is the absolute doer. Every single action I perform is inherently an expression of His worship. Even then, whatever worship I manage to complete happens purely because of His divine grace, and not by any independent power of my own.

॥ हरिः सर्वोत्तमः - वायुर्जीवोत्तमः ॥
|| *hariḥ sarvottamaḥ - vāyurjīvottamaḥ* ||

॥ इति श्री कृष्णार्पणमस्तु ॥
|| *iti śrī kṛṣṇārpaṇamastu* ||

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